

ISSUE 7
MAR-APR
80p



FOR SAM COUPE & SPECTRUM

REVIEWS OF:
Dynasty Wars..
Sphera..



..Master Dos
3D GAMES



EDITORIAL

I'd like to share a bit of good news with you. David attended the February's All Farnote Computer Fair in London, sharing a stand with the Sam Suckalement. Apart from gathering all the latest gossip, grabbing the odd interview, selling games and generally promoting the mag to all our sundry, he managed to gain quite a few new readers in the process too. So to them, and any one else who is new to ZAT, welcome to the mag and I hope you enjoy this and future issues to come.

A few weeks' back, most of the Z-team had tea with one of our most beloved contributors, the fair Felty. Felty used to write the Science Fiction article in earlier issues, but due to other commitments, had to leave the magazine in a sudden rush of wind. Now after putting her business matters to rights, she's set to come back into the fold and give us the occasional bit of comfort if needed (don't get any funny ideas, please!), and contribute a number of articles, which I hope will fascinate and entertain you. So welcome back Fel, we missed you!

Also joining the ranks of the ZAT household are two talented gents, Guy Middleton and Steve Wilson (of Integrated Logic), who will be contributing all manner of computer info to our technical sections, and lots more besides. Welcome aboard gents!

Going back to Dave, you'll notice that on all this issue, he's started yet another column! Where he gets the energy and spare time to do all this writing, programming, whatever I don't know. This time he's covering the world of Public Domain, the latest releases, news, etc. etc., for both the Sam and Spectrum. He has requested that if any Spectrum or Sam PD authors would like to send in material for reviewing, then please do so. All discs will be returned if required.

Well that's enough for this Editorial, so it's goodnight from me and it's goodnight from him (whoever "him" is).

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COVER BY DB

Thanks to Brian Whitehouse for a paste-up assist!



LETTERS

—ER-HUH—

Well, Melchior's gone on wandered off again into the wild blue yonder, so while we wait for him, late contributors on this issue's mail:

Dear ZAT

I have just received your *Lord Feb* issue of ZAT and have read it from cover to cover. However I have a few critical remarks, these are:

1) I think you should drop the CB LOG BOOK, CHIP SHOP and the WALLPAPER STRIP and replace these with a BASIC and machine code programmers section

2) I recommend you slowly convert to being a timely SAM Cover feature, as most Spectrum users will buy 75, 80 or CRASH

3) In the BACKCHAT section in issue 6, you only need to press F7 to load a Sam game instead of typing Load

4) I especially like the ARCADE ALLEY, PLAYFON, SCARBOX, LETTERS and the NEWSFLASHES sections

5) The quality of the comic strip is very bad which makes it very hard to see what's going on.

Your's Not Me Less Grampian.

Thanks for the letter Neil, who also included some rather nifty sound effect routines to use in the mag. Tackling his points in order:

1) CB Log Books aimed for those SAM and Spectrum owners who also happen to be CB operators of which there are many located around the country. It seems that many CB and radio hams do dabble with either one of our two machines that ZAT covers. The section now tries to concentrate on more computer related material and only appears at irregular intervals.

Chip Shop, although at first glance appears to mainly consist of a article related to Spectrum adventure programming, also has contained the areas in which you express the most interest, i.e. Basic and machine code routines and information. With the aid of our new "tech" writers, we hope contain much more of this material in future issues. For example, we

have a series coming up about SAM's sound chip, memory management and many more besides. Backchat will seek to slowly work its way through the rudimentary stages of programming in basic and plans to work through Structured Basic programming, within 3 issues time. The Wallpaper Strip was intended by Martin (its creator) to be a send up of the many super-powered characters, and is at times specifically aimed to his Scarbox section. Quite often, the Princess and Goblin characters reinforce views he has expressed.

2) Although the idea of being a SAM only feature would certainly appeal to a percentage of our readers, it is true that Spectrum owning readers do at present outnumber the Sam readers, but due to the computers compability, most articles will be relevant to both parties. However in future, we will be covering many more specific machine related articles in future issues.

3) The point about F7 has been noted, but to be honest it didn't enter our minds at the time! We merely use disk as our Sam and are more used to F9!

4) I'm glad you liked Arcade Alley, Mind Games etc.

5) The Wallpaper Strip deliberately looks rough as it best belittles the strips humor and title. As for Sentinel, apart from some unclear text, we saw nothing wrong with it at all. There's a wrap up of the current storyline in this issue, which may clear up a few points for yourself and other new readers.

Well that's it for this letter's page, hopefully Mac will be back next time. Keep sending in those letters, comments or criticisms, what all without them, ZAT can't function as an interactive journal. See you soon.

We are sad to report that last December, one of ZAT's longest contributors, Forbes South, died unexpectedly.

He was also a frequent contributor to Format, Turbo, and other Sam magazines for a few years. He had given them, and us considerable encouragement and advice. For us in particular, he wrote several detailed letters, some of which appeared in this letter's page. We have sent our regards on behalf of ZAT readers, and those associated with the other features, to his close friends and family. He will be sorely missed.



FAST BY NAME... BUT IS IT *Fast* BY NATURE?

Martin argues that perhaps it's time for FAST to use a carrot rather than a stick to lit'e light against piracy.

There seems to be two opposing views about the backing up of software in the computer industry. The first is the professional view that software should be backed up to ensure that the software is kept safe, whilst other people (let's call them 'concerns') for most of a better term) think that backing up should not be done at all and try to look down on people that suggest otherwise.

The professional producers of software say "Look, our software is so important that we suggest you make a backup copy and keep it safe." So, on the opening point of view this "Our software is so utterly important that it is not worth making a back up copy also we are so greedy and unbusiness like that we feel sure that if you need another copy of some software we have produced you will be stupid enough to buy another copy."

Now, some people who like to consider themselves experts on life, the universe, and everything (including comparative moral philosophy and copyright law) would say "Yes, but you would not expect to be allowed to photocopy a book to keep a back up copy would you?"

I have seen that argument, but by some people in the computer press, to whom I offer the "Kurt Vonnegut Veracity Diploma (First Class)" for the use of a false analogy. Because let's face it, if I was sitting down reading a book and the power failed, all I would do would wait until the power came back on. For the Sun to rise or get a lunch or a candle. There would be no danger of discovering that the sudden loss of power had rendered all the pages of the book blank, would there?

But of course power cuts can mean that a program or data could be lost or corrupted should the disk be in the computer. Hence professionals (REAL professionals, that is not pseudo-well-styled professionals) advise the backing up of computer programs and considering the original as a master disk.

But of course, what about tapes? Computer programs on tape can also go wrong due to no fault of the computer operator or anyone suggesting that whilst it might be O.K. to back up disks, it would still be wrong to back up tapes. "But," say the first faced Grandpious of the part of the computer industry that we ordinary folk have to deal with, "We control the copyright and what we say goes! If some individual software houses want to allow their customers to make back up copies, that is up to them, but that kind of behaviour is not for us!"

Right, that's fine. But WHY should Joe or Joan Public have to buy another copy of a game or utility if the original has become corrupted or been damaged? And what if the original software house has gone bust? (A lot of them have, whether due to bad luck, boredom on the part of the owner or pure mismanagement does not matter.)

Surely even the greediest, most grasping, capitalist running dog of the software industry (Hm, GLUTE sure what Chairman Mao MEANT by that term, but it looks good, eh?) must realise that it is wogally unfair to expect people to pay TWICE, especially if it may not be their fault that the software is dead?

So why on Earth don't FAST consider OTHER options to help stamp out the admittedly massive problem of computer piracy, rather than the only weapons they seem to favour at the moment, namely with various wailing roars and bribery?

Something that has occurred to me is that FAST could arrange a deal with a major insurance company to insure ALL software sold by member companies to fund replacement copies if necessary or to help set up a fund for refunding money should a member firm go bust or turn out to be less than fair and honest in it's dealings with the public.

All FAST need do is put say 10 to 50 pence on the cost of software sold which would on sales of 500 000 items of software produce a premium of some 150 000 to 1250 000, and FAST could earn commission on this premium which they would be able to use to further their aims. Instead of bribing school children and others to "grope people up" to use a colloquialism, why not spend money on educational packs for schools, computer clubs and colleges, perhaps including a promotional video too?

What do YOU think? Please let me know, here or ZAT. Thank you.

3D GAMES

by D. LEDBURY

Part 1

What is 3d? Well, mathematically speaking, it is the depth of an object. Now, we all know that most of our computer monitors, or TV screens have flat (actually curved) surfaces, but somehow various talented games programmers have managed to fool our eyes about the distances we are really looking into, and have created the 3D illusion.

The techniques of 3D games have been numerous over the years, but as with most graphical types - there is always an innovator behind most of them. A number of "buffies" have, in the past, created a game or number of games, which has inspired others to emulate their methods. The interesting thing is, that most of the major innovations, first came to the screens of our trusty ol' Spectrum, before any other machine! In this article, and in others to come, we will take a brief look at some of the companies or people, responsible.

One of the earliest companies involved in the development of 3D games, was New Generation Software, starting in early 1981 - 82. Most of the games produced by this firm, were programmed by Malcolm Evans.

Their first 3D title, "3D Monster Maze", pitted the player against a gorgon-like Tyrannosaurus Rex, in first person perspective, viewed maze (in other words, looking down a tunnel, as if you were standing there yourself). The graphics, although they would possibly seem basic these days, were extremely good for the time - although the sight of the charging dinosaur, would still be considered shocking. The most impressive thing was, that it was written for the blacky graphics of the 16k ZXSP.

New Generation did not rest on their

laurels. With the onslaught of the "new" Spectrum, they shifted their energies to Clive Sinclair's new machine. One of their earliest titles being a Spectrum version of their smash ZXSP game, "Monster Maze". With the Spectrum version though, they took a new approach. The maze this time, was rather reminiscent of a "pac-man" style maze, viewed from above, with a little shading round the walls. This time there were up to 5 dinosaurs to escape from! A fairly good, if simple game, which really fitted into the confines of the 16k Spectrum.

~ Monster Maze



Later titles from New Gen., included the highly original game, "Knot in 3D" - an odd



Knot in 3D ~

title, not unlike the light-cycle game in "Tron". (the one where the players had to avoid the trails, left by their bikes) but with traveled in all three dimensions. This game, designed to literally tie your brain in knots, was extremely colourful, extremely fast, and never seemed to suffer from the dreaded "bush". Certainly a game that could still hold it's own - even today!

Another title, "3D Tunnel", pitted you against spiders, bats, rats and even trains (if you had a 48k Spectrum!) in a fast moving, constantly twisting and turning tunnel. The graphics of the many "enemies" were good, and they still are! However, the colour changing wall, was a little too fast moving! This was a game that, despite being 5-6 years old, is rather similar to the recent game "STUN Runner" and the ST "Interphase" - possibly even better than the former!

~3D Tunnel



The last 3D titles, that I know of, from New Gen, was those making the 'TrashMan' series. These games started, as you might have guessed, a dustman! Although in these days of sexual equality, he would probably be referred to as a household waste-disposal person! It some how doesn't have the same ring!



Trashman~

The idea of the first game ("TrashMan") was simply enough to collect all the bins from a street, empty them, and return them back to the house. This task was made considerably more difficult, by walking on the grass, molous dogs, cars, passers by, cyclists, etc. These all stunned your 'salvage operator', and lost valuable time and points!

Additional points were gained by going into houses to grant certain 'favours', although no 'naughty' favours were involved! (Shame!) [4] The graphics consisted of an overhead view of the part of the street you were working in, and were particularly colourful, although the main sprite was a little small.

Although this game is slightly similar to "Paper Boy" - I would say that is probably much better! TrashMan was in fact followed by a non-3D sequel, "Travel With Trashman" - which gave you the task of collecting rubbish from sights around the world. However, this was fairly dismal when compared to the rather original first game. The third Trashman game, "TrashMan In Time" never materialised.

In a future issue, I will look at a 3D game, that not only made a mark in it's area of graphics - but also in the area of sexual equality! Plus more to come ...



Art Gallery



If you read last issue's Mind Games, you will remember that I reviewed the first true SAM adventure - 'The Famous Five'. Since then, a certain well-known magazine has decided to spoil the game for everybody, by printing the entire solution!

Now, I certainly feel very strongly about magazines printing adventure solutions, as it is the worst thing you can ever do for an adventure game. I'm not against giving tips to an adventure, after all - I do give them out myself, but complete solutions is just a completely stupid and senseless act for any zine-keeper (given the position on a adventure game! Personally, if it YGPG scheme), and of how many was my game, and I was hoping to earn a lot of cash from it after spending 18 months writing it, I would consider suing the magazine in question, for lost earnings.

However, this is just my opinion. Please write in and let me know

what you think on this subject. Regular readers of Mike Gerrard's adventure column, in Your Sinclair, may have heard him mention (one or two dozen times) a particular adventure - 'One Of Our Wombats Is Missing'. This is with very good reason, as he, in actual fact, wrote it!

'One Of Our Wombats,' is a new adventure release, from the talented stable of Zenobi, who are the undoubted kings of Spectrum adventuring (unless anyone can tell me differently, that is). The game tells the story of a trainee zoo-keeper (given the position on a adventure game! Personally, if it YGPG scheme), and of how many was my game, and I was hoping to earn a lot of cash from it after spending 18 months writing it, I would consider suing the magazine in question, for lost earnings.

His problems start, as he is making his rounds, and he finds an empty cage! Something is missing, but what? Well, after working out which animal is

**ONE OF OUR WOMBATS
IS MISSING !**

By MIKE GERRARD



missing (the title may be a clue: Adventure writing ability: PAW, I have some news for you. It seems that Gilesoft, have decided to create two new package deals for the Spectrum version of the system. So, you can now buy a beginners version of the system (which contains a simple tutorial manual, and the system) and then upgrade to a more advanced version (which includes the technical manual, some system enhancements, and an enhancement writing guide).

"Wambats", is definitely one of the most original adventures I have played in quite a while, and certainly has one of the most original names and plot ideas to I would say that Mike has taken a good look at the number of different games he has seen over the years, and has produced a title that, although best only, and written on "The Q&A", has enough 'spit and polish' to be worthy of his highest praise, if he himself had reviewed it!

For more details, and prices, contact Gilesoft at 2 Park Crescent, Barry, South Glamorgan CF6 8HD.

In my opinion, if you want a good light-hearted game, that is well written, with lots of bad puns, and tricky problems - then give this game a try! It's certainly a bargain! (And the Goblin's Gazette, on the B-side, is a pretty good freebie too)

Another little bit of news, this time for SAM owners. Zenith Graphics, the number one graphics demo team, are apparently working on a SAM Graphic Adventure. No idea what it's about, but if this is anywhere near as good as their PD Demo's, it should be something to look out for!

Contact Zenith Software, 26 Spotsland Topp, Outgate, Rochdale, Lancashire, OL12 7NL.

Contact Zenith at 42 Aldbourne Way, Kings Norton, Birmingham B38 2NL.

RATINGS	
PRESENTATION	75
COMPATIBILITY	80
PARSER	77
SOUND	74
OVERALL	83

Just room for another 'quicky'. David is currently trying to negotiate, for an adventure game he converted, to go on the Crash cover tape! I've played it, and it isn't too bad!

The game is called 'Escape From Koshima' and is about an escape from a Japanese POW camp in World War 2. It first appeared on the Amstrad CPC, and was well received by Crash's old Amstrad

If you have ever thought about getting the wonderful Spectrum

More soon. AV

Back-chat

BY DAVE & DAZ

Last issue, we dealt with all the pros and cons of loading tape or disc programs into your computer. Now we come on to the final stages to cover: saving, verifying and cataloging.

SAVING

Now, for once, I'm afraid we're going to force you to do a bit of manual labour. Besides, it'll get you into practice when this column begins its long cruise into the art of basic programming. Now, then, below is a potentially simple program routine, knocked up in 3 seconds by Dave, which will allow you the pleasure of having your John Hancock scrawled endless acres your monitor or TV screen a few thousand times. So take note:

```
10 INPUT "GIVE ME YOUR NAME" N$
20 FOR F=1 TO 100
30 PRINT N$
40 NEXT F
```

Now then, type what you see above into your computer, using 48 basic mode (128 owners can type it in 128 basic mode). Some owners can type it straight in to TIF. Make certain you do leave the necessary spaces and don't enter out the "0".

Right. Now that you typed everything in, finally lets see if it works. By typing RUN. If for any reason it hasn't worked, just obey the error messages and correct the necessary line numbers to. (We'll be covering error messages next time.) Like I said above, it'll be either you've misread out a vital space or a symbol.

Now next comes the bit you've been waiting for: SAVING TO TAPE. Make certain that you've got a tape in your recorder, and that you've connected your recorder's lead into your computer via the min socket. (-2A users need not bother.) Also make sure your tape is blank, or hasn't got a valuable recording that you really value—like a session of Det O Connor's greatest hits.

To save-type in SAVE, and in " " (speech marks) give the program a suitable name (8 characters or less). Press RECORD & PLAY, and finally RETURN.

FOR DISC USERS If you've got the Diskette or -D systems, type in SAVE D1 then the title of the program in speech marks. With Sam, type in DEVICE D1, then follow the tape saving

instructions. For -3 users, use SAVE "A", then the name of the program and end it with a final ". And lastly if you using a Micro Drive (yes I know it isn't a disc, but what the hell), SAVE "M.1", name of the program.

VERIFYING

Next comes the art of verifying, to see if you've got your nifty program safely stashed away onto either your tape or disc. To be honest, verifying is very easy indeed. If fact it's so easy that even a one-eyed wombat could do this task with utmost ease.

All you do is REPEAT the commands that you followed for your own particular computer system when saving, except this time around you replace the word save with VERIFY (and in the case of tape, press PLAY only and put the lead in the ear socket). Now that's everything you need to know about saving and verifying, and since you're well acquainted with the loading procedures from last time, you should have no trouble at all when you come to use new software on your computer.

CATALOGING

Cataloging is mainly associated with disc users only, although tape users who own a -2A Spectrum can benefit from Cataloging. Basically, cataloging allows you to see what files, programs, etc are physically stored on a given disc or tape.

Firstly lets deal with discs.

The Plus D and Microdrive both utilize the exact same method: CAT 1. With Sam it's D12 1, and with -3 owners, it's CAT "A 1". To use these, type in the respective commands and hopefully on your screen will appear a list of every program currently occupying space on a particular disc. You'll see the name of the program, and depending upon which system you've got, some relevant information.

For -2A users, you do the following: CAT "T 1" but obviously the computer will take a while longer to physically sift through the data recorded upon the tape, and display the contents upon the screen. Non -2A users can cheat by using LOAD " ", adding a title that you know doesn't exist upon that particular tape. For example: 222222.

Well that's it for this issue. Nexttime, as I said earlier, we'll be covering the most common error messages that crop up from time to time while programming or just using the computer in general. Anyone who would like to contribute tips to this section for new computer users, then please drop a line to ZAT via the main address.



PLAYPEN

SILVERWORM MASTERTRONIC PLUS
PRICE: \$2.99
(2 PLAYER GAME) RE RELEASE

"Gentlemen: As of 0240 hours, a solemn alliance of rogue generals, began taking dangerous steps to undermine world safety, and the very existence of all mankind. To put you clearly in the picture, let me briefly review a lesson in recent history. After World War IV, there was an unanimous agreement that the voice of nuclear arms would forever be left behind, and that in future, defense research would concentrate on designing and developing conventional weaponry.

But it seems that some of our kin secretly decided, and plotted to insure that our nuclear legacy would not go to waste.

These "rogue Generals" have already taken over several key sites, going directly against the rules of the constitution. They have already begun armoring Nuclear sites, which they fully intend to use against the world community, as part of their latest doctrine. There have been attempts to negotiate, but all such attempts have failed. Although the majority of our weapons are in a state of "non-activity", we can still attempt to stop the rogues, by using weaponry developed by our best scientific minds here at Operation Silverworm."

"We have developed two main types of defense weaponry: helicopters and land-attack vehicles, each kitted-out with the most high-tech defense equipment that is capable of destroying the generals and their forces. But do not think the task ahead will be easy. The generals are located in several zones from desert to Arctic wastes. And they have spent considerable time deploying and laying out their own defense nets. They have a variety of exotic weaponry of their disposal: from gunnered helicopters, to ground-to-air missiles with heat seeking warheads that are very difficult to elude. There are also waves of aerial mines, aircraft, pogo-copters to negotiate. On land, the enemy has employed several battalions of Viper tanks, most of which have been oil-filled into the area.

But do not think that it will be a bumpy-ride all of the way. We were able to saturate the zones with special mines, which when detonated will release a plasma force-field which will protect Silverworm weaponry for a short period of time. A second type of mine, will detonate a bomb-burst effect, capable of destroying any

enemy craft if within range. You will be able to lock-on to enemy craft by using the latest computer generated targeting sensors, which will display clear, graphical representations of the enemy craft, without being distorted by background terrain.

We believe that each rogue general is aboard a heavily shielded flying command craft located at the heart of each zone. But these command craft are of obsolete stock; they may be well armed, but they do have one common weakness: a hit their shields in the same place enough times and the resulting feedback will cause the craft to self-destruct.

Although there are some of you who will want to undertake this mission on a one-to-one basis, it's well advised that team efforts will double the expectancy out there in the zones and enable you to have a better chance in completing the mission. If you need to re-fresh yourselves with current military association of operations, then I suggest you spend time looking through files such as Falcon and the F16 simulation files which are my best suggestions.

But please remember this: due to this situation, the world's security and its very future hang by a veritable thread, a silk thread, hence the code name of this operation. This is our only hope. If you want to volunteer, then please remain behind after this emergency meeting has been concluded. Thank you.



RATINGS

PLAYABILITY	89
ADDICTIVENESS	89
COMPATIBILITY	80+
GRAPHICS	88
SOUND	88
OVERALL	89

Life is never dull for Dizzy and the rest of the Yolkfolk. In the past our spellbinding adventurer has travelled to many far-off distant lands in search of gold coins, getting tangled up in devious puzzles and circumstances, rescuing his close friends (and the love of his life) from all kinds of trouble. This time though, things are going to be very different indeed! The evil wizard Zola, one of Dizzy's oldest adversaries, has cast a fiendish spell which transports Dizzy and company to the land of Personality. Personality consists of four islands, and each of Dizzy's friends are exiled to the particular island that matches their own peculiar personality.

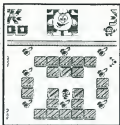
Cool dude Dancel has to spend time in the deep freeze in the Land of Ice, closely guarded by mad penguins. Dylon spent most of his time daydreaming, and so found himself high and dry above the Land of Clouds. Old Grandfather Dizzy had a long and prosperous life, and now is in his twilight years. Most think he's a bit cuckoo (although he would strongly disagree) and thus the spell carried him to Cloud-Cuckoo land, under threat from giant teddy bears and clocks. Lastly Dizzy was taken by Zola himself to his island stronghold and placed in the deepest, darkest dungeon, protected by Zola's best henchmen. Dizzy himself was left in the lurch, and that has the hard task to rescue his friends and defeat Zola once again.

To rescue a friend, Dizzy must complete five levels, and to complete each level, Dizzy has to collect fruit. Lots and lots of fruit. Clear a level and Dizzy carries on playing the occasional bonus level to boost his chances of relegating a chum. But hindering his progress are the island's native inhabitants. To deal with them, Dizzy has to push sliding blocks into the unfortunate Bears, Bees, Clocks squashing them into a pulp.

Dizzy will have to be extremely careful though. He may not have to worry about going ber-splatt from great heights, or being mesmerised by the Crazy Hawk, but unwary dangers lie in wait. If Dizzy gets into a temple with any of the moles, or worse gets flattened by a sliding block, then bang goes one of his three lives! Worse still, there are floating 22222's that will make our hard-boiled egg adventurer very tired and loopy (and if the way is clear, but don't look now Dizzy, I think you're the one on today's plastic menu).

Not everything is doom and gloom. There are many paths that'll turn the blocks into more fruit, and mystery bonuses to boost the score. And if you pass the magic 10,000 points, every time Dizzy gets an extra life!

Although Kwik Snax, and for that matter, Fast Food, depart from the usual Dizzy format, this sudden change of direction by the Oliver Brothers, doesn't mean that Snax is a damp



snail.

Everything that you expect from a Dizzy game is there: brighter, friendlier, more colourful and faster than ever before. The music is very catchy, a humming disco-beat that entices you to play the game.

The Dizzy sprite hops and runs around the blocks, gathering up the fruit with no trouble at all. And if our yellow is unfortunate enough to run into a foe, the characteristic swirling darts and dazed expression makes Dizzy really live up to his name. A terrific touch. The layouts are clear and well drawn.

The opening title pic is top quality Spectrum art, and as for the Dizzy Band well, I never knew that Old Grandfather Dizzy could play some mean electronic guitar, so well!

As for as I could see, there's nothing wrong with this game at all. It's lively, very addictive (well, not as addictive as Arkonoid) and well worth the price tag.

Also available from Codemasters is the Dizzy Collection, which includes within its contents past adventures on Treasure Island, And Into Fantasy World Plus Dizzy 4: Magicland.

RATINGS	
PLAYABILITY	90
ADDICTIVENESS	91
COMPATIBILITY	90
GRAPHICS	92
SOUND	91
OVERALL	92

"Enter the most bloodstained chapter in history" - boasts the cover, of this new release from US Gold. Dynasty Wars, has absolutely nothing to do with "The Carrington" family! No, the Dynasty referred to by this game, is ancient China, set during the Han Dynasty.

"The Han Dynasty has been overthrown by rebellious warlords". Your task, is to select one or two fighters, from four available, and to ride and battle on horse-back, battling your way through eight legions of warriors to finally defeat your nemesis - the evil warlord, "Hung Chao".



Now, although there has been more shoot-em-up's, blast-em-up's and goodness-knows-what-em-up's, over the years, this must be one of the first horse back ridden game of this type that I have ever come across! (Except for "Joust" that is, but that doesn't count!) That in itself is a good sign.

Another good sign, is the fairly convincing (if simple and very short) background story. My knowledge of Eastern History, only goes far back as Chinese student excursions, during the 'Cultural Revolution', but the setting in ancient China, seems like an excellent choice.

Yet another point in the games favour, is the excellent animation of the horse. This horse, actually looks like a horse and even moves like a horse! Okay, so the

game is in monochrome - who cares! Graphically, it is good all the way round! The villains are numerous, smooth and deadly! The only mean I have, is that the scrolling is occasionally a little rough.

Sound wise, is where the game is really shown up! I wish that programmers will realise that more and more people own Spectrum 1228's these days! After all, the 1228k has the same sound chip as the G3 (hah!), so surely they can use a little auto detection to bang an extra sound file in?

Another point, that may upset many people, is the multi-leads. Now, in this game, they aren't so bad - but as with

any multi-lead game, they are very annoying at times. However, if it means that software houses can write bigger and better games, by using a multi-lead, then I certainly have nothing against them! Please don't forget about 1228k owners, though! It is a waste, leaving that 80k difference go to

waste!

All together, "Dynasty Wars" is a great game, that may have a couple of rough edges, but is still an excellent buy never the less! If you want a change from your standard 'blasting' fare, then give it a try!

RATINGS	
PLAYABILITY	83
ADDICTIVENESS	79
COMPATIBILITY	64
GRAPHICS	86
SOUND	40
OVERALL	81

Sphera - Enigma Variations, 13 North Park Road, Harrogate, HG5SPD.

This is definitely the most exciting software product available for the SAM Coupe at the moment. Those of you who have a SAM will know that there are 4 graphics modes to use on the Coupe.

Mode 1 is identical to a Spectrum screen, though different colours can be selected out of the palette of 128. The amount of memory taken up by this mode screen is 6 3/4K.

Mode 2 takes up twice as much memory, but allows 8 rows of two colours in each character square.

Mode 3 is a high definition screen, using twice as many dots across the screen (512). However, you can only use 4 colours, and like mode 4, it uses about 24K of memory. Mode 4, as you probably know allows 16 colours to be used on any dot of the screen, using the same amount of dots as a normal Spectrum screen (256 by 192).

Don't worry if all this confuses you! All you need to know is that the bigger the amount of memory used by a screen, the slower the game will be. This is why, even though Amiga and ST's are twice as fast as Spectrums, their screen update is effectively twice as slow. This is because their screens use 4 times as much memory. Of course, what you really need to know is that Sphera uses Mode 2, which is very, very fast.

If you compare the Amiga and ST, both their processors work at around 8 million operations a second, whilst the SAM works at about 6. Looking at the size of the memory the screen uses, their screens use about 32K, where as SAM mode 2 screens use only 12K. All this means is that Sphera graphics are very fast, even when compared to the ST or Amiga!!

The incredible speed of the graphics makes the game look very good. With clever use

of colours, the landscape looks like made 4 graphics, though all the smaller ships are monochrome.

The boys at Enigma must have had a bit of a comfort going on here I think, because the sound department obviously didn't want to be out done by the graphics lot, as the music and effects are superb.

As you all know, graphics and sound are not all that makes a game, even if they are as good as these. What really matters is the gameplay. If you've seen any screenshots of it, or even seen any other reviews, you'll know that Sphera is a shoot 'em up. All the elements of a good shoot 'em up show themselves here. You've got alien ships, and plenty of them, including some very big and of level monsters. There are things to collect, these are left behind by alien ships and are occasionally hidden behind scenery! Some will give you full energy, some give you an extra life, of which you start off with 5, and the one that we all like, power-ups.

To start off with, you have a meeky one shot at a time, slowfire laser. Grab a power-up and you can fire quite fast, get another and you've got dual fire! Eventually you will end up with triple fire forwards and rear fire as well. Think that will help you? Well, this game sure isn't easy!! Even with full weaponry the enemy can quickly pounce on you, so it's up to you and your joystick to battle it out as fast as you can.

Remembering the waves and formations of aliens is paramount, and can be the difference between life and death.

So, the game is fast, colourful, sounds great, joystick challenging, but what's the plot? Well I haven't told you so far, because it doesn't really matter. At the end of the day you don't care whether you're fighting for the galaxy or rescuing Princess Melina 3rd from the evil hordes of Quark!

Oh well, I suppose I might as well tell you...

You are the unfortunate victim of a set up. Framed by your scheming business partner, you have been sent to the infamous artificial prison planet of Sphera for 20 years. After 3 long years in terrible conditions, fighting hunger and fever, you spot a robot controlled supply ship break a leg on landing. Taking your chances you sneak inside the vessel before the repair drones appear. After a few minutes the craft has been mended and you override the controls. Taking what little energy you have left, you prepare to fight your way out of the horrific Sphera to freedom, and revenge!

So, in summary, and excellent arcade game that, whilst not original, takes the SAM Coupe seriously into the gaming world. If you haven't got it, get it.

<i>RATINGS</i>	
PLAYABILITY	90
ADDICTIVENESS	91
COMPATIBILITY	SAM
GRAPHICS	90
SOUND	90
OVERALL	94

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Publica DOMINIUS

David Ledbury

Public Domain, to explain to the uninitiated, is software that has been written with no copyright restrictions. In other words, the programmer has given you permission to copy his (or her) program, as many times as you like, pass it on to your friends, etc. The only real restrictions being, that you cannot re-sell it, or amend or alter it, without the programmers permission.

Public Domain Software, is mainly available from Public Domain Libraries. The Library is NOT supposed to take any profit, except possibly duplicating costs, advertising costs, and mechanical wear and tear. This doesn't mean to say that a PD library CAN'T make a profit, as (as far as I am aware) there are no laws or rules set for PD libraries (except those set by the "SAM Coupe Public Domain Software Association". These will be covered in future issues.), but the public decides at the end of the day, if the overall price is just far too dear, by simply ignoring that library.

Although PD software is available in a multitude, for machines such as: The Atari ST, PC, Commodore Amiga, Amstrad PCW, or even the Amstrad CPC, most people do not realise that there is a large range available for the SAM. There is, in addition, a number of titles available for the Spectrum, but these are very small in number, and are mainly available for the Spectrum +3 (partially due to it's CP/M capabilities).

So what is available?

Well, PD software can cover a wide range of areas. Anything from disk manipulation utilities, to word processors,

spread-sheets, graphic programs, data bases, etc to adventure games, arcade games, mental dexterity puzzles, graphics and so on. The list is almost endless.

PD can serve a number of purposes for programmers. Many software houses, occasionally pass a glimpse over PD titles, as a search for "new blood", so any "literate" programmer, can use PD to advertise his/her particular skilled area.

Another use, is for software house to "test the water" with new products. By seeing the public response for a graphic slide-show, or whatever, they can tell if their next game or utility, is going to be a mega-hit or a mega-flop!

At ZAT, we have seen a wide range of PD software, over the last few months. However, this unfortunately (depending on your particular computer) seems to be about 90% SAM specific! However, we are in contact with one of the few Spectrum related PD libraries, Garner Designs (see address at the end), from who we should be able to access some Spectrum PD titles for us to cover, in next issue's column. If anyone can pass on information relating to any other Spectrum PD libraries, then please forward it to me, via ZAT's main address.

Next issue, I plan to review a number of titles. This will include the "RoboCop" demo, from a certain Guy Middleton.

Some Public Domain Contact Addresses:

GARNER DESIGNS: 57 LOWERS WALK,
DUNSTABLE, BEDS. LU5 4BL.

JENITH GRAPHICS: 42 ALDBOURNE WAY,
KINGS NORTON, BIRMINGHAM B38 9UP.
(responsible for SAM graphics, and
stunning demos)

MARTIN VAN SPANJE, VONELUDE 40,
2106 AX HEEMSTEDE, HOLLAND. (Part of
the well-known Dutch, Butterfly Team)
G MIDDLETON, 25 VICTORIA MOUNT,
HORSFORTH, LEEDS. LS18 4PL (Creator of
RoboCop Demo, reviewed by CRASH & YS)



CHIP-SHOP

In this issue, I will continue the data for the adventure locations and connectors. This time, the quarry and alternative universe home areas are entered for. The last group of locations follows next issue.

To enter the data, simply load in the saved data from last issue, and enter it in the same way as last time. To play test the new locations, follow the same technique as last time but substitute 19 or 29 for 2.

Don't forget to save the data!

Location 19	Location 33
A gridy area	Living room
Location 20	Location 34
A grassy area	Landing
Location 21	Location 35
A grassy area	Stairway (outside)
Location 22	Location 36
Inside an old shed	Stairway (up)
Location 23	Location 37
On the quarry face	A garage
Location 24	Location 38
On the quarry face	A bedroom
Location 25	Location 39
On the quarry face	Landing
Location 26	Location 40
On the quarry face	Landing
Location 27	Location 41
On the quarry face	Landing
Location 28	Location 42
On the Top of the quarry	Bedroom
Location 29	Location 43
Outside the house	Bedroom
Location 30	Location 44
Outside the doorway	Bedroom
Location 31	Location 45
In a kitchen	Bedroom
Location 32	
Landing	

Location 19 E	19	20
# 18 21		
# 18 25		
Location 20 W	18	19
# 18 24		
# 18 22		
# 18 21		
Location 21 E	19	27
E 18 24		
# 18 20		
Location 22 W	18	20
Location 23 E	18	19
# 18 19		
# 18 20		
Location 24 W	18	21
# 18 21		
# 18 25		
Location 25 E	18	19
E 18 26		
# 18 20		
Location 26 W	18	20
E 18 20		
E 18 27		
# 18 25		
Location 27 W	18	26
# 18 20		
E 18 24		
# 18 21		



Location 28 0	TO	36			
Location 29 8	TO	38	Location 37 E	TO	38
Location 30 4	TO	39	Location 38 E	TO	39
E 30 51			Location 39 W	TO	38
W 30 53			S 30 56		
S 30 34			N 30 43		
			E 30 48		
Location 31 W	TO	38	Location 40 W	TO	39
S 31 32			N 31 43		
Location 32 E	TO	38	E 31 41		
N 32 34			Location 41 W	TO	40
W 32 31			N 32 44		
Location 33 W	TO	32	E 32 45		
Location 34 W	TO	38	Location 42 S	TO	39
E 34 32			Location 43 S	TO	40
W 34 35			Location 44 S	TO	41
Location 35 W	TO	36	Location 45 W	TO	41
E 35 34					
Location 36 S	TO	35			
N 36 39					

protection of files, and one or two other little tricks.

"Humphrey" is supplied with a simple, easy to follow, 4 page manual, which goes through the screen layout and command keys. This booklet has obviously been well put together, by an artistic expert, and someone who has used the program quite a few times. (Hello Darren and David)

Upon loading, a simple count-down, reads in the directory sectors off your disk. This stores in memory, all the information relating to file names, file positions, and status of files.

The screen then clears, to present you with a directory of the files, listed neatly below a 'disk map'. (This is simply a rectangle, which represents an area 10 sectors high, by 156 tracks long.) The total space used on the disk, is shown by the amount of 'white' that is filled into the disk map.

If any of the names in the file list, are PROTECTED, HIDDEN or ERASED, then they are marked by a P, H or *

I have been put in rather an interesting situation with the following SAM review, as this title "Humphrey", has in actual fact been written by 2 fellow members of "The Z Team" i.e. Matthew Holt, and David Ledbury. Anyway, this review will be as fair (and unbiased) as is possible, and

to matters favor, will not feature any ratings!

First of all, what, are you asking, is "Humphrey"? Well, putting it briefly, it is a general purpose disk utility, for the SAM Coupe, with SAMDOS. It has been designed to allow easy viewing of the area used by files on a disk, showing of the state of



mark. By simply moving a pointer over a name, using the cursor keys, the disk map shows which parts of the disk are used by the current file, by flashing those areas on the map.

PROTECT or HIDE can be toggled (turned on or off) at the touch of a button. Likewise, so can erased files if possible (although a statement in the manual says that there is a small chance of a file being unrecoverable, yet seeming to be so). Recovery is more likely, if the disk with the erased file, has not been saved on, since the accidental erasure.

Additional features include directory sorting (which sorts all the files into alphabetical order, and moves the erased files to the end) and a backup "Thumprey" facility.

However, none of these changes will have any effect, until the key for 'WRITE DISK' is chosen, as this will save the new directory onto the disk. Until then, the file exists only in memory. This means that, by selecting "ERASE" on a number of files, then "WRITING" the directory, a selective erase can be

managed simply - without MasterDOS! This also reduces the chance of disaster striking, although you are warned NOT to change disks, without READING in a new disk, as this will damage the incorrect disk!

As well as the above features, the top right of the screen, contains a file information area, which is updated whenever a new file is pointed to. It contains information, such as current file type, starting address of the current file, length of file, starting address or auto-start line number, and the track and sector of where the file starts.

All in all 'Thumprey' is a handy little utility, and although it doesn't claim to be a 'Norton's Tool' for SAM, it could prove to be useful for most SAM owners. 'Thumprey' is available from 'Steve's Software', FREE with SC_FILE!

One question, I bet you're asking - why 'Thumprey'? The answer is, as Matthew put it - "It sounds better than calling it SAM Coupe Disk Manipulation and Investigation Utility". True enough, I suppose!





Many criticisms delivered about SAM, have been directed to SAM DOS, which to be honest, is rather lacking. SAM DOS supplies you with only the barest possible commands - LOAD, SAVE, VERIFY, MERGE, etc. In fact, little different from the tape commands!

However, back to MasterDos!

Installing MasterDos is easy. BOOT as usual (hold down F9), and it is soon loaded in. The comprehensive manual suggests (quite rightly) that you make a back-up IMMEDIATELY! This is easily done with the new command BACKUP 'D1' TO 'D1' (or BACKUP 'D1' TO 'D2' if you are lucky enough to have 2 drives). Only the used space is copied, so the copying is soon completed.

Note: unlike SAMDOS, where SAVE DOS CODE 25985/0000 is enough to make a backup copy, you must back up MasterDos in this way, due to it's slightly more complex nature.

So, what is different about MasterDos?

Well, although MasterDos still preserves the majority of the existing SAM DOS commands (I think only the odd one or two have been changed - slightly), it adds a whole new selection of commands, and new possibilities, including:

RAM DISKS. If you have been (or still are) a GBX Spectrum owner, you may have used the GBX Ram Disk facility. This is simply an area of memory, that has been set aside and is treated in the same way as a disk drive. You can read, write and do many other similar operations to a Ram Disk the same as a normal Disk Drive. With MasterDos, up to 5 Ram Disks are available. They can use any size of memory, with a

maximum limit of 780k available (the same as a disk drive). Ah, but where does the extra memory come from? Well, the Ram Disk can fully use the new 1 meg expansion! Up to 4 meg of memory, via Ram Disk! Sounds fantastic!

SUB DIRECTORIES. If you have ever used a hard-disk based machine, you will soon recognise the need to group some of your files together, to stop having pages and pages of files on your directory. Now, thanks to MasterDos - SAM has this facility!

Up to 254 sub-directories can be created, by the simple command OPEN DIR "name". Each of these can be changed simply and easily with the new DIR command. E, for example, you have a Directory called FLASH, simply type DIR=FLASH then the current directory is now changed to FLASH. To return to the main directory, simply type DIR=/, Going up or down a sub-directory is just as simple.

But how do you get that figure of 254 directories, as you are only allowed 80 files on a SAM DOS disk? Well, you use

FORMAT. Now as you may know, FORMAT divides the disk into 80 tracks, each containing 10 sectors, which are 512 bytes long. The first 4 tracks contain the information that makes up the directory (it is this information that Humphrey utilizes), and takes $4 \times 10 \times 512$ bytes in size, i.e. 20k. The remaining space is 780k (usable). Now the directory contains the information for 80 files (1/4k long apiece). What MasterDos allows you to do, is to allow over 4 tracks for the directory, which allows you to have more than the 80 file limit. Each additional track holds 20 files,



way, which gives you an extra 10% speed over SAMDOS formatted disks. However, the disks are downwards compatible, as long as they have been formatted to 4 tracks!

One problem that many people have when writing files, is knowing which file is the latest version. I certainly have this problem when writing things for ZAT. I have lost count of the times I've had to find the latest version of a document, and have searched umpteen disks in vain! However, with the new SAM Bus's clock facility, and MasterDoc - you can 'date stamp' your disks, with the time and date of saving.

MasterDoc adds many new disk handling commands, to inspect any file, to manipulate data, in fact much more than I could ever cover in a review! It is a certainly a worthy purchase for ANY SAM user. Well done, Doctor Wright!

Phone SAMCo on: (0792) 703001 for details.

<i>RATINGS</i>	
USEFULNESS	97
PRESENTATION	N/A
COMPATIBILITY	SAM
OVERALL	97

SC Filer - Steve's Software - Phone 0223 23650 (after 6pm) for details.

SC Filer is another useful utility, from the capable hands of Steve Nutting, and as it's name suggests, is a filing program for the Sam Coupe.

SC Filer, rather like +D Filer (which it

owns a little to) allows you to prepare your database layout by designing data boxes on screen. These can be used either for fixed information (headings, etc.) or to input new data.

128k is available for data on an unexpanded SAM, but a simple alteration will allow the 512k upgraded SAM additional memory storage. Further memory modules (such as the 1 meg upgrades) can be utilized just as easily.

Before setting up your database, you are asked which fonts you would like to use in your database. There are 72 different styles available, and 8 different styles can be used in your database, single or double height. Likewise, the program asks you about the on-screen palette. Since Mode 3 is used, only 4 colours are available, but this is ample for most purposes (unless you are trying to set up a psychedelic file system!).

All standard features, such as Search, Amend, and List are featured, in addition, the Print option features selective printing - very useful for names and addresses!

All in all, another excellent utility from Steve's Software, nicely documented by Carol Brookshank (the writer from Format!), and complete with a very rare little free disk utility (guess what?). Definitely recommended in my opinion!

<i>RATINGS</i>	
USEFULNESS	95
PRESENTATION	N/A
COMPATIBILITY	SAM
OVERALL	95



SAM-ANTICS

by *Guy Middleton*

Now available from the lovely people at SAMCO are three new devices. The first is an extra whopping 1Mb of memory. This comes in the standard expansion box, and plugs into the connector on the back of the machine. It really does give you an extra 1Mb. So if you've got a 1/4 Mb (256K) machine now, you'll end up with an enormous 1.25 Mb! You can have up to four on at one time, enabling a staggering 4.5 Mb if you've got a 512K machine to start off with. Furthermore, to enjoy the extra memory at once, SAM Computers should be packaging a two disk graphics demo of TOP GUN! (I wonder who could have written this? Ah) This demo consists of 195 digitised screens, played in mode 4 at a rate of over 8 frames a second - this gives great quality. An impressive start to SAM link software - let's hope that plenty more programmers start taking advantage of it. The extra memory can not be used from BASIC, and you need to buy a program called MASTERDIS to use it.

Thus comes on disk and is a program that replaces the old SAMDOS. It enables you to do all sorts of wonderfully complicated things like subdirectories. By using the clock on the SAMBox, files can be date stamped. This means that as well as seeing when files were copied, you can work out the latest version, something that I could definitely do with! Certainly the most useful ability though, is the amazing option of telling the SAM to treat 768K of extra memory as a disk. So, what good's that? Well, you can save programs into memory, and load them in an instant. Also, copying is much easier and quicker, as you can load all the contents of one disk into memory, then save it all, in one go, onto another disk! Please ring SAMCO for details and prices on 0792 700300.

So what's interesting about all this to Spectrum users? Well firstly, if you had a SAM, you to could have a machine capable of the above! So, what real reasons are there to splash out on a Coope? It is a very powerful machine. Maybe not as much as the Amiga or ST (both of which cost over 100 more than the price of the SAM. The latest I heard is that both Atari and Commodore are lowering the prices of their machines by '70, so that the ST will be '299 and the Amiga '329.) It is very flexible and is extremely easy to use. Bung a disk in the hole in the front and you could be doing anything from playing great games or creating a work of art. Flash! is packaged with the Coope. Also, it is very good for programming. But what about all my games that I've got for the Spectrum? Well, a good question, dear reader. The SAM is great for this. You know that you've read half of this excellent magazine by the time one Spectrum game has loaded? Well, you can save a most of your games onto disk. Once they're on disk, you can then load them in about 2 to 3 seconds!

This is, as you SAMsters everywhere are saying to yourselves, not really true. I seem to have a great difficulty getting a lot of my games to load into the SAM in the first place (Please write and tell me how you get on in this field). There are some excellent programs out there to convert your games as easily as possible, but all problems stem around the fact that the sound is logic in the Coope is pretty useless. I can tell you that fairly soon, all our problems will be over!

SAMCO are currently working on an interface that will plug into the back of the Spectrum. You load your game on the Spectra, and then press a button. All the code is then ported over to the SAM via the network port! In this way, about 99% of all Spectrum (48K) games will convert to the SAM. So, if you've got a Spectrum, get saving! If you've got a SAM, then get your joystick ready!

REF 90/12 SENTINEL SPECIFICATION SHEET: A17

CONTRACTUAL AGENT COT

DESIGNER

PROJECT CODE: 2100101/1 2100101

Blackburn & Garbett



This is the standard Sentinel unit, one (although variations of mass structure and design are used by regular GSF personnel).

There is also a fully computerized battle suit, used in hot terrain environments. It also utilizes Standard uniform construction methods, although it's notably more bulky and contains a greater capacity to ward off burning in most breathable (humid) environments.

If serious injury occurs, penetrating wounds at bodily pressure points will close. A antibiotic spray will be injected to counteract pain and stop infection. This is only a measure, in order to hold the larger proper medical treatment.

UTILITY BELT/DOPPEL

Storage pods (for medical and related).

Back up radio and receiver LED compass.

Wells (hollow for additional storage).

Boots constructed of durable leather or with internal metallic coating. Cleats can be fitted to sole to use in unstable environments.

Trousers made of an outer synthetic cloth, with several inner layers made up of a strongest metallic fibres to resist weaponry discharges.

BACK PACK POWER SOURCE (A18) SPECIFICATIONS

Internal anti-fusion systems power holder and ammalfunctions. Exterior interface to power external equipment. Oxygenation unit, two tanks, capable of lasting for 12 hours (inlet) plus mask, built into pack either side of the power source (STW) line act as a cooling mechanism to control temperatures within the fusion chamber.

ARMOR (ARMS) SPECIFICATIONS

Both the armor, back pack and helmet are constructed from the same materials, several layers thick.

Outer layer: Ceramic agent, capable of resisting heat and cold, and deflecting laser (white in color) and hand arm discharges (2.5mm).

2nd layer: polymerizable plates for flexibility. Ceramic matrix construction.

3rd layer: Insulation material (flex matrix).

4th layer: Shock absorbing gel agent.

5th layer: Temperature, heat/cold circulatory systems.

6th layer: Nylon material for contact against skin.

The layers contain pores to let skin breathe and control temperature within the uniform.

Flexible platelets at joints enable most bodily movement.

Additional armor can be attached via interlocking seals to cover arms, legs, and whole chest area. Shin/knee guards can also be added.

Interior bodily waste disposal system.

MCP (ARMS) SPECIFICATIONS **SENSORS** Detect changes in radioactivity.

Standard communication systems.

Light neural image interface.

Visual interior surface screen heads up display, showing data on outside air, vibrations and corresponding signal data wave signals. Also displays CG, Mod, SURFAC, and relevant dysfunction indicators.

Main Cybernetic Processor (MCP) controls all helmet and uniform functions via alpha/delta wave bio link.

Bio Receptor Link (BRL) connected by neck implant to link brain function to MCP.

SENTINEL

The Story So Far...

It began on Ryvanna, an M class planet circling Alpha Centauri - a planet on a state of crisis. Thrust into the midst of a warzone, a small party makes their way through the jungle. The group comprises of a guide, Ned Gibson; an Australian Salvage Operator and John Paros; an ex-member of the Sentinel Corps, gifted with paranormal powers of the mind. These abilities come into play when he is able to anticipate a "surprise" attack by the Octogen resistance.

They manage to beat back their attack; most of which retreat back into the surrounding jungle. Later, Ned finds a concealed entrance into an underground silo. Once inside, they find a perfectly preserved ship, sealed inside an automated hanger. But further investigation is delayed when more Octogens intrude upon the scene. Having murdered their guide - they attempt to capture John and Ned, pending their termination for killing members of their organisation...

Meanwhile on Terra, a man is coldly murdered, his body pushed down a lift shaft within the headquarters of the Omega Congregation. But the owner of the building is fully aware of this crime...after all he's the one who committed it! Thus Damien Trask begins a plan, which if it reaches fruition, will ensure Omega becomes the most powerful company in the 23rd Century's corporate market... But even the best laid plans never run smoothly...

With deft thinking, John creates a diversion to give Ned time to break into the hanger. While making their way to the lowest level, John's mind is assailed by

images...that furiously emanate from an outside source - but then seem to come from within the mysterious craft. The sudden feedback causes him to black out. Left to his own devices, Ned is captied to surrender by the Octogen leader, Vladimir. But time runs out. The silo is bombed by Terra state fighters and begins to collapse...

Terra's ruling body, the Presidium, holds an emergency session at their seat of offices New Atlantis, trying to negotiate a peaceful means to end the Ryvannian crisis, caused by the assassination of Governor Barkett. This act has generated growing resentment on Ryvanna towards the Presidium who have frozen steps towards Ryvanna gaining independence. They also fear that the Presidium will introduce legislation allowing full mining rights of Ryvanna's vast mineral resources, especially the "wonder fuel" Cyberite. (these and other views are forcefully upheld by the Octogen resistance movement). The loudest voice in Ryvanna's delegation is the eminent environmentalist Doctor Shadon Scott. Scott's views and stubborn streak, jeopardise Trask's plan. Trask therefore fakes an Octogen attack against Terra by blowing up one of Omega's Corporation plants on the moon. This arouses Scott, and ensures that the Doctor meets Trask in secret. Trask, his identity kept from Scott - shows Scott that he has acquired files - linking him to Octogen activities and naming him the leader of the organisation. Trask will keep the files from falling into the hands of the authorities if Scott will present evidence to the Terra Bureau of Investigation (TBI) to destroy Octogen and ensure that the colony accepts the Presidium's proposals. Trask gives Scott time to think things over but tells the Doctor that if he contacts the authorities the files will be released, his daughter, Kara, killed.

Back in the silo, Ned gains a temporary truce with the Octogens to save themselves from certain death. They gaze

entry into the ship - and John, although still weak, manages to control the ship's guidance computer (which exerted it's probe over him earlier) and direct it to an Octagon stronghold in the mountains. There John and Ned are incarcerated but at least their execution is put on temporary hold pending an interrogation.

Scott, realises that he is in a tight corner. Even so he attempts to rectify the situation and sends a coded message to Rywana to his daughter. Hopefully she can facilitate some plan to stop his threat to their colony's future before time runs out and he has to betray their cause.

Vladimir is suspicious of Ned and John's reason for being on Rywana; believing that their task to salvage a lost communications satellite is to be a flimsy cover for something else. His suspicions are correct. John never left the camp, but was "officially" taken off active duty - to fully explain to his partner his real and is working for the FBI to recover a reason for coming to the colony. But lost "super-weapon": Pandora. He's also leading a surprise attack on the camp. All this sudden turn of events do a surprise to Ned who up till now thought this was nothing more than a straight-forward business trip. The FBI have sufficient knowledge that Pandora is aboard the ship.

John locates it, but is held at gunpoint by Kara. How she, or Octagon, know of Pandora's existence (the keeping all knowledge of the weapon strictly confidential) isn't clear. They intend to use the weapon as a deterrent in order to gain their goals, but Ned intervenes, just as Kara raises her gun to kill John who spurs Kara's offer to help Octagon. The Iarrian forces overwhelm the camp and Octagon prisoners are taken to interrogation centres in the capital. As the Iarrian ships rise into the sky, their departure is witnessed by an unknown party, who works for Trask. Trask it seems knows all about Pandora - and issues orders for it's immediate retrieval.

Even though this is a blow to the Octagon organization, this will certainly not curtail their activities. The struggle continues. For John, his mission is over. That night, he takes Ned to a local tavern, but although he thinks everything is over and done, fate is about to intervene and events take on a different, more troubled route.

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NEWSFLASHES

SAM "PUMPS UP THE VOLUME"

Although Sam is blessed with a rather nifty sound chip, when playing it through your average television you don't get the full sound quality that you should expect, due to the fact that most TV's are not equipped with suitable stereo capabilities. So to come to the rescue is the SAMPLIFIER, a stereo amplifier that plugs into the lightpen socket, and takes its "juice" directly from the machine. You can then plug in your personal speakers or headphones and end up having your ears blasted into orbit!

SAMPLIFIER costs £20.00., yet you can for an additional £5 have the amplifier with speakers. Speakers complete with 3.5 stereo jack plug cost £6, by themselves.

For further details contact BG SERVICES, 64 ROEBUCK ROAD, CHESSINGTON, SURREY, KT9 1XJ.

They also stock some pretty good Spectrum Machine Code books, so ask for details!

NEW DEMO

Our latest recruit, Guy Middleton, has recently completed yet another special SAM demo, based on yet another blockbuster film. This time Top Gun has been the source of his inspiration. The demo has been specially written for the new SAM 1 Megabyte upgrade and features nearly 200 mode 4 graphics which animate at 8 frames per second! The demo is free with each 1 meg upgrade and is available from Samco.

Phone 0792 700300, to speak to SAMCO.

CALLING ALL SF AND DUNGEON MASTERS

During the cold Winter months, Dave, and ZAI's resident arty type (who can that be?) got talking to a gent by the name of Rik Jones (no, not the one who was the sidekick to the Hulk). Rik and several other Gangsters & Dragons, URP (live Role Playing) and board game fanatics, are all members of Telford's Fantasy & OS&D club: The Reals.

Rik has decided to set up a fanzine related to this hobby, also incorporating Science Fiction and several other fantasy orientated topics. What's more our resident adventurer, the noble Sir Andrew of Vincent has... "interfaced" (that's what he calls it) his Mind Games section with the new fanzine.

Called the Adventurer's Herald, it's a quarterly publication. It costs 80p per issue (or £4.00 for a subscription) plus the obligatory stamp.

For more details write to RIK JONES, c/o ZAI, PO BOX 488, DWYDALE, TELFORD, SHROPSHIRE, TF7 4SL.

YET ANOTHER NEW FANZINE!

Also in the planning stages is another new fanzine, edited and created by ZAI's resident OS/SF fanatic, Malcolm. Provisionally titled: Blast It!, it's aimed at SF users. The first issue will hopefully appear in May. More news on costs and other info to be released soon.

SPECTRUM MESSENGER

SAMCO have yet another interface in the planning stage! But - shock, horror! It's a Spectrum interface!

"The Messenger", is a special Spectrum interface, that aids SAM owners that still have their Spectrums, in transferring their 48k games to SAM's speedy disk drives. Giving a little to the +B and Disciple, it allows you to "Snap-shot" your Spectrum game, and "zip" the game through SAM's MIDI ports, thus by-passing the problems with loading those Spectrum games by tape.

The interface can also be used for inter-machine communication, and is priced at £29.95.

Contact SAMCO, on (0792) 700300.

ZAT PROFILE NO. 2
DAVID LEDBURY

ZAT JOB & DUTIES: Technical Editor*. In actual fact, technical advisor, assistant technical writer, part-time SENTINEL advisor/writer, SAM game reviewer, resident "Mad Hacker", writer of very long articles, and of course - founder!

PREVIOUS JOBS:Shop assistant, in fruit & veg shop, and household hardware shop (at one point, at the same time!). Computer clerk at photo developers (I sorted out the mised up paccys!). Also filed secret military papers!

CURRENT JOB:Unemployed, training (hopefully) in journalism, and programming. Currently learning PASCAL.

PLACE OF BIRTH:I wasn't taking notice at the time!

PEOPLE AT SCHOOL THOUGHT I WAS:Dangerous to speak! But mostly harmless!

HOBBIES:OTF, writing long articles, reading (SF, horror & programming) books, watching films (SF or gory horror pics), CB, hacking, remixing records - and lots of other things!

AGE:More than 20, less than 22

LAST BOOK I READ WAS:...Never-Ending Story (Michael Ende), Standish Shai Rat (Harry Harrison), Dracula's Return (Robert Lory) and Guards! Guards! (Terry Pratchett)

LAST MOVIE I SAW WAS:Nightmare On Elm Street 5 - Dream Child. (Not as good as the first time!)

FAVOURITE/LEAST FAVOURITE TV PROGRAMMES:Prisoner (Call



Black H), Alien Nation (the series - Sky 3) and the new Star Trek.

I dislike the Simpsons, Eastenders and Coronation Street.

FAVOURITE PERFORMERS:Pat Shop Boys (the new albums great!), Jean Michael Jarre, some old Ultravox stuff, Depeche Mode and various "house" type music.

ODDEST HABIT:Addicted to unusual sandwiches, and exclamation marks!!

GREATEST UNFULFILLED AMBITION:To appear on TV or Radio, to have 1000 + readers, to write the next blockbuster game, to rule the world! (I want so little!)

GREATEST ACHIEVEMENT:Becoming part of "Team SAM"

THE WORLD WILL REMEMBER ME AS:Will it remember me? Probably as a very ambitious person!

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COMIC KIOSK...

- Danger Publications

COMICS ON TV

Yet again Channel 4, 'the most cultural TV channel since the birth of BBC 2' has decided to air another programme aimed towards those individuals who are crazy about collecting comics. The program itself is a little bit crazy too. Produced by Red Zoster Productions, Ker-Splott!! is a series of 10, 15 minute programs, each dealing with a particular aspect of the comic genre in a very off-beat way.

The opening programme, "Revenge" introduced to us two insane characters, a married couple. The husband is an over-obsessed comic collector who stores to keep his collection of mammothish fully in alphabetical order, who never complains and bickers in the world that any sane person who doesn't collect comics is the lowest form of life on this planet (and any other). His wife, far from being the loving, caring spouse, feeds his obsession, and plots revenge by ripping up his collection and flushing them down the loo (she plans to kill him too in an equally gory way).

Inter-mingled in the weird drama (the acting's way over the top, the storyline flimsy, but I think it's supposed to be this way, and in doing so enhances the programme) are sporadic flashes of comic pages and artwork tied into the main theme. As examples I saw Miller's Wolverine, the brutal confrontation between Elektra (1st love of the kind here, Dandelion) and Dandelion's ex-narcotic Bulletee Bit of Batman, same obscure 50's thriller mag where it seems that every page featured at least one screaming female (wailing her lungs to their fullest, and one cartoon strip about a man being attacked by blood thirsty dog people) (the mind boggles!).

As far as the programme goes, it's more like 15 minute comedy of errors than a factual insight into comics. But there is available a booklet which accompanies the series which looks promising. If you want a copy then send a postal order or cheque for £2.00+ stamp to Ker-Splott!!, Po Box 400, London, W3 6WJ. Next time they're dealing with Super-Villains, can't wait to see that!

Going into more factual programmes, Central (and some other ITV stations) are showing "Comics the Ninth Art" which is a genuine look at the development and history of comics from 1920 to the modern age. Unfortunately, the program airs at around 1.30 p.m. in the

morning. Fine if you're a light sleeper, and your parents don't mind you having the poogle-box on in the middle of the night, but stupid if you've got to go to work in the morning. And well, there's always the VCR to fall back on...

GONE BUST...

Bad news. Strip, the only decent adult aimed Marvel UK magazine has gone on! But the dust after issue 20. Surely some one out there can revive this title and give us our fortnightly doses of Death's Head, Night Raven, Ganghis, Grimaced and the Man From Cancer. The good news is that the Ganghis, Grimaced and Night Raven stories will be reprinted on Graphic Novel's sometime in the early part of this year. So look out for those.

Right then, guess what's next? It's a couple of comic reviews. So without further delay, here's the first one.

BATMAN 30. TITAN £5.95.

Get out those red and green glasses, you're going to need them if you want to appreciate the brilliant 30 art inside. It's a story dealing with Batman's avian nemesis, the Penguin and which features cameo's of the Riddler and the clown prince of crime. The Joker Artwork story were headlined by my favourite comic artist, John Byrne, during his stint over at the Distinguished Competition before he came back to Marvel to take over the Avengers' group and Hammer. Apart from the main tale, there's an early example of a 30/50's strip as well as several group posters drawn by a talented group of top leading artists. The cover was designed by Pope Marinis, who was responsible for the excellent computer created comic "Digital Justice", also released by Titan.

SUPERPRO. MARVEL £2.95.

Apart from doing the occasional bit of artwork, meaning the odd feature or writing the book, one of my most favourite reading pastimes is American Football. Not playing it mind you (I'm a bit too small and too lightly built), but watching it, yes, and you can probably guess that I was one of the million odd knuckle who sat glued to the TV to see who would win this year's Silver Anniversary Superbowl at Tomco Bay.

Whether this particular comic novel was released in conjunction with the anniversary is not clear, but it is endorsed by the NFL, on the story itself is rather good. Although I must point out that this isn't the first time that an ex-football player gains super-powered abilities and decides to become a semi-regular superhero. Marvel itself, as part of its New Universe collection of titles, used the same concept for Kickin' It, but in SuperPro there

a difference. The "superhero" itself is the ultimate American football uniform which we'd've been used in the game's future. If it wasn't for the tiny snag that each suit costs a small fortune to be mass-produced by the hapless inventor, unable to sell his invention to the NFL, puts the suit in mothballs. Unfortunately other less-kindly individuals decide to steal the suit, and other valuable football memorabilia and sell it on the black market.

But already on the scene is Phil Greyfield, an ex-football pro whose career came to a sudden end due to a series of nasty accidents, and who currently is a reporter for Sports Inside. He tries to stop the theft, and ends up being locked up in a store-room, while the robbers set the building ablaze. In order to save his life, he dons the suit and is transformed.

The rest of the story I'll leave to readers, but I will say that it does tackle drug addiction and has the type of unsatisfying ending that may point to a continuing series.

This is definitely one comic that I hope does continue. The first issue is a limited collectors item special, so buy it quick! The excellent painted cover was done by Joe Jusko. The story is written by Fabian Njiru (who also does New Warriors, Alpha Flight, New Mutants and Nomad) and was drawn by several artists including Bob Hall, Jess Del Bello and Kim DeMolder.

MORE COMIC SHOPS

Here as promised are the remaining comic shops in the UK. If I've missed any out, please let me know!

MEGA CITY, 18 INVERNESS ST. CAMDEN TOWN LONDON NW1 MON-SAT 10AM TO 6PM

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WONDERWORLD, 883 CHRISTCHURCH ROAD, BOSCOMBE, Bournemouth, Dorset

WONDERWORLD 2, JONAS NICHOLL SQUARE OFF ST MART'S ST, SOUTHAMPTON

That's it for this time. Next time I'll be looking of up and coming reviews featuring such stars as Captain America, the Web-Slinger, etc, etc and probably more reviews too. So until next time, take care

COMPETITION TIME! WIN A GAME!!!

We started this competition last time, such we've decided to extend the closing date from March 30th to April 20th. So there's still time to enter... Just answer these questions:

- 1) Which Century is Sentinel set in? a) 21st b) 23rd c) 25th
- 2) Which coin went out of circulation last year? a) 10p b) 2p c) 5p
- 3) What is the name of Brian's most haunted house? a) Barley b) Buckingham c) Glyns
- 4) How many nightmares on Elm St have there been? a) 2 b) 5 c) 8

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ON THE ROAD

David Liddings

Well, judging by some of the comments that I have seen on some of the first ZAT Questionnaires to arrive back, it seems that this page is one of the most popular in the magazine! I don't mind this, but it makes me wonder what I am doing right!

Anyway, Darren has probably mentioned this already (somewhere), but for those of you who missed, I recently attended the AG-Format's Show (surprise, surprise!) - except this time, I actually ran a stall at the show, for ZAT.

I had decided, due to the cost of the stands, to share a stand, with the well-known SAM Disk magazine - The SAM Supplement. So, naturally enough, I met up with the Supplement Editor, and programmer of MindGames (v2) - David Tonks at Birmingham, at 6.30 am, February 2nd.

After a long and interesting journey, in which David revealed that he had successfully managed to download graphics, to his SAM, from his Amiga! I've seen some, and they are much better in quality than some of the standard ST converts.

The journey to the hall, and the early part of the morning, is a bit too boring to go into. That is, except to say, watch out in the mornings - you can easily get run over, by people running around setting up! I also set up my stand, with some very "snazzy" (?) enlarged card-mounted covers, and a selection of ZAT issues, and even some SAM software at reasonable prices!

My stand did fairly well in the morning, although it did slow down towards midday. So, asking Brian Mumford to keep an eye on my stand - I made a swift break for freedom!

On the main "stage", various people were giving SAM related talks. Although I missed most of them, I caught the back end of Doctor Wright explaining his new SAM Basic additions. This is really an expanded Basic, with features for dedicated programmers - how about music, playing in the background of some other section of your program? Over 16k can be set up for this (apparently!) Additional features include Array Sort, Join & Split lines, improved editing, Multiple Character sizes (putting CGE a step further!) and much, much more!

Doctor Wright has also given us a very detailed interview, which should appear within a couple of issues!

There were also various rumours flying around, about software for SAM. Alan Miles, was talking about educational software, with news of new software due to be released. However, the rumors in fact referred to SAMCo's new software title, REVELATIONS. More news about this, on the News Flasher page. I also managed to catch a glimpse of the SAMPLIFIER, more about this on News Flasher, as well.

Another face at the show, was that of Brent Stevens. Now Brent, is the founder of the "SCPDSEA" (The SAM Coupe Public Dispensary for Sick Amigas?) - No! The SAM Coupe Public Domain Software Association!, a body created to check the quality of PD software. More about them next time, in the 2nd PD section. Anyway, sharing a stand with Brent, was Colin MacDonald. Colin runs the excellent SAM Disk magazine - PMED.

PMED must have some of the most interesting bits and pieces I have come across in Disk magazines, and one thing I particularly liked, was a scrolling shoot-em-up called "No Way Back". NWB is written in BASIC, and one level of it is on the latest disk, Contact PMED at 40 Roundhill, Monifeth, Dundee, DD5 4RZ. See ya at the next show! DL

Wallpaper Strip *by scholes, seeby & db.*



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